

ACCESSING COMMON LAND FOR FOOD - POLICY STUDY

CECÍLIA DELGADO

CICS.NOVA, Interdisciplinary Center of Social Sciences – FCSH.NOVA

Faculty of Social Sciences and Humanities - Universidade Nova de Lisboa

2020

Framework: This document resulted from the participation of its author in a training program of the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation - LEAP – Policy Development Initiative 2019/2020

Abstract

Portuguese organic food consumption to meet national individual and institutional demand is swiftly increasing, notably triggered by Covid-19 pandemic. This increasing demand is an opportunity currently missed due to lack of land access for farmers. At this point, we claim that land availability needs to be centrally taken into consideration in the formulation of local and national food policies.

In particular, we suggest: 1) policy options in order to make them inter-cross coherent, notably regarding land needed to achieve goals; 2) mechanisms to strengthen multi-level and cross sectorial food governance, with a focus on land accessibility for organic food production, in particular vegetables and fruit.

Based on the municipality of Torres Vedras, as a pilot case, we conclude that local policies require a bundle of instruments which will vary from place to place. Nevertheless, local authorities have a key-role to play as facilitators for land access, primarily by identifying and mapping idle land either communal, public or private. That land should be made available to organizations and farmers willing to supply local schools, in priority, as well as local consumers. Results from field visits and local stakeholders interviews in Torres Vedras suggest that cooperation across city departments and local stakeholders could spearhead an integrated food policy that would turn idle land into the decisive element of a blooming local food system. In conclusion, any municipality can do this, if there is political willingness to start a collaborative process, within municipalities, to think strategically how to access land for food.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1 - A pandemic as a trigger to local food systems.....	4
1.1. The Problem - Lack of local organic food to supply school meals	5
2 No land to increase local organic farming	5
2.1. Lack of coherence between existing public policies in relation to land.....	5
2.2. Innovative legislation, yet lack of a land strategy	5
2.3. Missing links between urban planning, land access and food	6
2.4. Missing links between existing food stakeholders and initiatives.....	6
2.5. Missing integrated sustainable and food strategies at local level	6
3. Municipalities cannot access enough local organic food to supply schools.....	6
3.1. Municipalities willing to have local organic food in school meals have not enough supply....	7
3.2. Local public land is not being used as a common good	7
3.3. Municipalities are not able to ensure the must needed agroecological transition.....	7
4. How this pattern may possibly evolve?.....	7
4.1. Starting from national to ground it locally.....	7
4.2. Local authorities interest for food and farming need a deeper engagement with land.....	9
5. Need to increase local land organic farming for schools supply	9
6. Towards a policy grounded in local context: Torres Vedras as a paradigm shift	10
6.1. How and where to find local land for our food? A multi-actors approach.....	12
6.2. Re-discovering Common Land	14
6.3. Common land still available in Portugal today.....	15

6.4.	Common land in Torres Vedras waiting to be farmed.....	16
7.	Policies approaches to turn land available for farming.....	18
7.1.	Local authorities as the facilitators for organic farming land access.....	18
7.2.	Fiscal incentives to turn idle urban land more attractive for farming use	19
7.3.	Local authorities support conversion from conventional to organic farming	19
7.4.	Swapping land fees into land for organic farming	20
8.	Having local authorities as key facilitators for land access remains an immediate option	23
9.	Need for more time and collaboration regarding other potential policies	24
10.	Local authorities supporting access to land for farmers – a Call for Action	25
10.1.	Engage a multi - stakeholders' debate.....	25
10.2.	Make land available for farmers by mobilizing agricultural land under public domain.....	25
10.3.	Provide a facilitating environment to agroecological farmers and green economy.....	25
10.4.	Prioritize organic food supply to schools canteens	26
10.5.	Create awareness on seasonal food, taste and nutrition.....	26
11	The time for action is now: What comes next?	26
	References	27
	Acknowledgments.....	29
	Disclaimer	29

List of Tables:

<i>Table 1 - Existing national public policies regarding land and food.....</i>	<i>8</i>
<i>Table 3 - City departments that can play a relevant role on land access based on Torres Vedras</i>	<i>12</i>
<i>Table 4 - Torres Vedras Civil Parishes land availability profile.....</i>	<i>13</i>
<i>Table 5 - Stakeholders that can play a relevant role on land access -Torres Vedras framework.....</i>	<i>13</i>
<i>Table 6 - Policy option matrix – Comparing the various policies approaches</i>	<i>21</i>

List of Maps:

<i>Map 1-Torres Vedras location in Iberian Peninsula, Portugal national and regional contexts.....</i>	<i>10</i>
<i>Map 2- Common Land - Hectares by county at national level.....</i>	<i>15</i>
<i>Map 3 – Common Land - Lisbon District and its counties</i>	<i>16</i>
<i>Map 4– Torres Vedras municipality – Availability of common land per civil parish</i>	<i>17</i>

List of Figures:

<i>Figure 1 – Common land in the Civil Parish - UF Carvoeira e Carmões</i>	<i>18</i>
<i>Figure 2 – Common Land in the Civil Parish of Turcifal</i>	<i>18</i>

List of Boxes:

<i>Box 1 - Mouans – Sartoux land approach.....</i>	<i>11</i>
--	-----------

1 - A pandemic as a trigger to local food systems

Coronavirus is a complex new situation to any policy makers and it will have a tremendous impact on the way we live, in particular in relation to food¹. This pandemic has exposed a desperate need for local food answers. In Portugal, local farmers around cities were overwhelmed by demand increase. In a spontaneous movement never seen before, members of the national platform *Alimentar Cidades Sustentáveis* (Feeding Sustainable Cities in English) began to share contacts of farmers delivering food boxes in urban areas. This grassroots movement led to a national policy “*Alimente quem o alimenta*” (Feed who feeds you, in English), coordinated by the Ministry of Agriculture. This “on the dot” policy aims to map out each and every local producers in a national online platform² in order to ensure that food is sold to the final consumer, reducing substantial economic losses.

Thanks to this positive move, we argue that this turning point might be the needed trigger to rethink mainstream food systems. For years the global food system was able to supply food at a price that local farmers were not able to compete with, in relation to food pricing. However, with the closing of borders and transport restrictions food, at least fresh perishable food, as vegetables and fruit, can become scarce unless they are being sourced locally. Whatever may be lost in efficiency by localizing food production is gained in resilience: regional food systems can better bear all kinds of shocks.

To foster local food system land is needed, which can often be tricky. Land in Portugal is mostly private and no clear public policy exists on land access for “life fundamental functions”³ as food production. Nevertheless, Portugal central government created the national land bank (Law No. 62/2012) which, in theory should facilitate access to public land by making rural land for lease and sale more transparent. However land being made available through the bank is only state owned, rural and a large amount concerning forestry which is not able for farming. Definitely no comprehensive connection is made between land demand and supply, out of state possession, either private land or belonging to local governments (municipalities and civil parishes) which is mostly the case in Portugal.

Today, more than ever, local governments have a word to say on food system model approach, as ultimately, they are the ones who must ensure basic goods for the community, as food⁴. The pandemic we are living in highlighted that government need to play a role on food issues. In line with this, in March 2020 the Portuguese central government created a working group to monitor and evaluate the conditions of the agri-food and retail sectors supply “due to the dynamics” of the market determined by Covid-19. (*Despacho n.º 3389/2020, 18/03/2020*). In the report – “Exceptional measures delivered by the Agricultural Minister”⁵, supply of fresh food is seen as central. However this can be a huge challenge as Portugal is not able, currently, to meet its own needs in terms of vegetables and fruits.

¹ <https://covid19estamoson.gov.pt/estado-de-emergencia-nacional/pacote-de-medidas/>

² Link: <https://www.facebook.com/watch/?t=58&v=624392831477521>

³ Food and farming as a life sustaining functions is again a positive externality from the pandemic we are living in. Notably the few services remaining open besides health care centres and pharmacies were food distribution outlets.

⁴ Idem.

⁵ Link: https://www.ruralbit.com/client_manager/files//1585736699-3691.pdf (accessed on April 2020)

We sustain that a public policy to facilitate land access to produce local organic food to supply school canteens is the perfect entry point to rethink the existing food systems. The decision for organic food, in particular, fresh vegetables and fruit, is a commitment that local governments need to take into account as a way to engage people in the discussions on how the transition towards a better food system that sustains a long-term quality of soils, biodiversity and cycles adapted to local conditions, ecosystems, and people, should look like.

In summary, we advocate that local authorities should definitively play a major role in facilitating access to land for farmers, in particular engaging agroecological farmers, notably young ones from agricultural schools and young scholars. Hopefully they are the one who can be involved in green jobs, needed to ensure a more self-resilient society that will better cope with food shocks as the one we are currently facing.

1.1. The Problem - Lack of local organic food to supply school meals

National organic food consumption to meet institutional demand for organic food is swiftly increasing in Portuguese municipalities due to the rise of local governments awareness and willingness to improve school meals quality throughout organic and/or local produced food. However, local production is limited due to the absence of a multi-sector and multi-actors' approach to bridge demand and supply, notably regarding land access at local level needed to ensure organic food supply. In the next section we will explain why, in our opinion, this is happening.

2 No land to increase local organic farming

There are five main reasons that might explain why land at the local level is not easily accessible in spite of its availability. They are presented below.

2.1. Lack of coherence between existing public policies in relation to land

Data from the National Organic Farming Strategy and Action Plan (2017) shows that land used for organic farming in Portugal (2015) is 6.6% of the total Agricultural farmed land (2009). In addition, almost 70% of the organic land is pasture. On top of this, the percentage of organic land taken for horticultural production is only (0.6%) being slightly higher than organic fruit production (1.5%). The scarce territorial presence of organic farming in Portugal, and the strong demand, especially in urban areas (Marian, 2018) explains that 49% of fruit and vegetables consumed and 43% of cereals and legumes are imported (data from 2014 to 2016). In total, eleven countries supplied 480,725 tonnes of organic products (from 2014 to 2016) to meet national consumption.

2.2. Innovative legislation, yet lack of a land strategy

The Action Plan for Organic Farming (2017) defines that “the area allocated for organic farming should be 12% of the national agriculture land by 2027, and that land for fruit and vegetable, protein crops, nuts, cereals and other vegetable crops intended for direct consumption or processing should triple by 2027”. However there is no clear statement on how this will be

achieved, notably due to lack of data on private land ownership and public land. In addition there is no baseline survey on how much land is allocated today to organic farming, and to conventional farming. Or, how much land for fruit and vegetable, protein crops, nuts, cereals and other vegetable crops intended for direct consumption or processing, exists today, in order to triple it by 2027.

2.3. Missing links between urban planning, land access and food

In spite of the passionate and extensive debates among scholars and some practitioners, food from production to consumption has been neglected for decades by both urban planners and agricultural policy makers – as urban planners treated agricultural land as potential building ground and agricultural policies focused on rural areas ((Lohrberg F., 2016). Portugal is no exception. For long time food has been forgotten in city planning and far from urban agendas (Pothukuchi & Kaufman, 1999; Tornaghi, 2014). Nevertheless, integration of food into urban planning being an emerging topic (Cabannes & Marocchino, 2018; FAO, 2020; Morgan, 2015) is still underappreciated.

2.4. Missing links between existing food stakeholders and initiatives

In Portugal the resolution taken by the Council of Ministers [*Resolução de Conselho de Ministros 103/2018*] acknowledges the need of a better integration of currently disconnected food actors and sectors. The Portuguese national platform - Feeding Sustainable Cities is a civil society initiative aiming at reshaping the Portuguese food systems, that emerged in June 2018 with 40 members and counting 350 members in 2020. At national and local levels several organizations are leading isolated food initiatives, some of them struggling to find land (Delgado, 2015; Kruth, 2015; McClintock et al., 2013). Those food initiatives represent a huge window of opportunity for food policy making and feeding cities.

2.5. Missing integrated sustainable and food strategies at local level

The E-book *Alimentar boas práticas: da produção ao consumo sustentável* 2020 (Delgado, 2020a) illustrates and multiplies the amazing efforts made by local champions and some local governments, including: the diversity of actors involved, their territorial scale, the multiple spaces where they take place; the multiplicity of entry points through which practices are initiated; their dynamics through time; the wide range of entries in the food chain; the diversity of financial resources used and combined. Not surprisingly, there is not a single initiative or program, from production to consumption, that includes land access. In line with authors as Angotti, Prové et al and Timmermans et al (Angotti, 2015; Prové et al., 2016; Timmermans et al., 2019) we argue that the lack of a coherent and integrated food strategy that considers land access as a starting point deserves attention.

3. Municipalities cannot access enough local organic food to supply schools

There are, at least three, direct and indirect effects of the insufficient local organic supply. All of them are falling into local authorities influence as we will explain.

3.1. Municipalities willing to have local organic food in school meals have not enough supply

School canteens willing to embrace organic food in schools' menus face an insufficient supply (Delgado, 2020b; Sousa, 2019). Aware of this, the current National Organic Farming Strategy and Action Plan (aim 2.1.) aim to:

- Integrate the distribution of organic products in the new school milk and fruit regime;
- Incorporate organic products in the menus of public canteens;
- Foster the creation of biological menus in cafeterias through a classification system.

So far nobody from the state coordination team work (*Direção Geral de Agricultura e Desenvolvimento Rural in Portuguese*), was able to clarify how those ambitious goals are going to be met. The present policy study in Torres Vedras might be a contribution for this.

3.2. Local public land is not being used as a common good

There is a huge potential of resources in Portugal and abroad (Allagnat, 2012; Carvalho, 2015; European Access to Land network, 2017; Lusa, 2011; Rodrigo & Rioufol, 2017), including public land not being used for several reasons, for instance inversion of policy priorities or local needs, either at city or at civil parish levels. Moreover, that land is in severe risk of being used for profit e.g. real estate housing. Regarding common land (*Baldios⁶ in Portuguese*), the big challenge is its reversion to forestry use, mostly explored by private interests notably by pulp paper companies, paying minimum leasing amounts to communities and civil parishes. We will return to this later.

3.3. Municipalities are not able to ensure the must needed agroecological transition

Municipalities need to have a food vision and a coherent policy for their territory regarding food from production to consumption in a way able to sustain the long term fertility of soils, biodiversity and cycles adapted to local ecosystems, climate change and people needs (Dubbeling, 2015; Yigitcanlar & Dizdaroglu, 2015). This is particularly important in municipalities where agriculture (conventional one) is the main economic driver as in Torres Vedras.

4. How this pattern may possibly evolve?

4.1. Starting from national to ground it locally

To change this pattern, a combination of national and local policies is required. To start with there is a need to acknowledge that central government has tried to do this since 2017, even if with limited success so far. Table 1 presents a non-exhaustive list of policies directly and indirectly related to the issue of land for food production.

⁶ According to infopédia, Baldio means: 1. rural land owned and managed by a local community according to their own customs and practices, generally used for the purpose of grazing cattle and taking advantage of available resources (collection of wood and brush, etc.); 2. land that has no known owner; 3. land that is not cultivated; 4. land not built and that is not used for any purpose. In <https://www.infopedia.pt/dicionarios/lingua-portuguesa/baldio> (Accessed in May 2020)

A window of opportunity comes, in particular, from the National Organic Farming Strategy and Action Plan (110/2017) with several measures regarding the increase of organic production notably, vegetables and fruits as before mentioned (see row 3).

Table 1 - Existing national public policies regarding land and food

	Entry point	Policies	Contribution
1	Land	National Planning Policy Program [<i>Lei de bases gerais da política pública de solos, de ordenamento do território e de urbanismo in Portuguese</i>] (Law 99/2019).	Foresees an increase of land allocated to organic production in line with the National Organic Farming Strategy and Action Plan
2		National land bank [<i>Banco de Terras in Portuguese</i>] (Law 62/2012)	Offers agricultural state land for selling or renting in rural areas.
3	Agriculture	National Organic Farming Strategy and Action Plan [<i>Estratégia Nacional para a Agricultura Biológica (ENAB) e o Plano de Ação para a Produção e Promoção de Produtos Agrícolas e Géneros Alimentícios Biológicos in Portuguese</i>] (Council of Ministers Resolution. 110/2017)	Foresees an increase of 12% in the current SAU (agricultural land used and not used) for organic production
4	Health Food	Integrated strategy for promoting healthy eating [<i>Estratégia Integrada para a Promoção da Alimentação Saudável in Portuguese</i>] (Order No. 11418/2017)	Advocates for local food procurement, raises awareness on organic food
5	Food Supply	National strategy for green public procurement [<i>Estratégia de Compras públicas Ecológicas in Portuguese</i>] (Council of Ministers Resolution. 38/2016)	Advocates for short food circuits in order to minimize environmental impact of food procurement.
6	Food Governance	CONSAN – National Council for Nutrition and Food Security (<i>Conselho de Segurança Alimentar e Nutricional</i>) [Resolução de Conselho de Ministros 103/2018]	Advocates for Stakeholders food Governance at national level. Acknowledges the need of a better integration of and linkages of the currently disconnected sectors, and the need to formulate and implement a sustainable food policy.
7	Climate	National Low Carbon Roadmap [<i>Roteiro para a Neutralidade Carbónica in Portuguese</i>].	Advocates for more land for organic farming
Other relevant worldwide programs going on in Portugal:			
8	Food	Organic Regions strategy - [<i>Bio – Regiões, uma estratégia integrada de desenvolvimento dos territórios rurais, in Portuguese</i>]	Torres Vedras, Idanha à Nova, São Pedro do Sul are among the municipalities that signed the pact. No information available about what to expected from this international network, besides the commitment of being an organic region
9		Slow Food Moviment - [<i>Movimento Slow Food – kmo, in Portuguese</i>]	Advocates for more local food production and consumption (not necessarily organic)

As Table I illustrates, there is a considerable amount of very well intentioned top down policies, defined to be implemented at national level, with limited success so far. Why policies are mostly decided under a national umbrella? This is a complex combination of factors, ranging from a strong national top down culture of decision making, a silos vision which prevent resolution of holistic issues (Rego, 2018), lack of data and last but not least, lack of transparency⁷. Regarding the inability of national policies to ensure land access, a call for more local action is needed.

4.2. Local authorities interest for food and farming need a deeper engagement with land

Since 2010, an increasing number of local authorities have developed an interest in food and gardening (*Hortas Urbanas* in Portuguese) as part of their local development policies and/or their sustainable development (Delgado, 2017, 2018; Gonçalves, 2014; Leticia & Fernandes, 2014; Mendes, 2015; S. C. A. Rodrigues, 2012). The reasons are very diverse: promoting social cohesion, food awareness, reduction of food waste, helping people in need to be able to reach food. It is time to expand those interest to a more holistic food vision that would be consider an integrated food strategy: promoting local organic food in public schools, restaurants and local markets; developing a land policy to increase local food supply; supporting local businesses and job creation; promoting environmentally friendly forms of farming as a way to manage environmental risks or preserve assets (e.g. land and water resources); or improving their food resilience as part of their climate change strategy.

5. Need to increase local land organic farming for schools supply

Due to the lack of a national food policy that would facilitate land access to organic food production, namely to ensure organic food for school meals, there is room for local and regional action in order to:

- Making land available for farmers by mobilizing agricultural land that is already public.
- Improving organic food supply (vegetables and fruits), including resilience⁸ and food sovereignty⁹;
- Providing opportunities for learning about food, taste and nutrition, including seasonal changes;
- Strengthening local economic green activities;
- Enabling a facilitating environment for agroecological farmers
- Engaging debates among stakeholders on how the transition to a better food system.

⁷ An example that can fairly illustrate this is the closing of the virtual national observatory, a public instrument created under the National Organic Farming Strategy and Action Plan after its public dissemination on the national platform Alimentar Cidades Sustentáveis. The peculiar closing event explanation was the need to make have a public governmental presentation before making it public accessible. Unfortunately, more than 3 months after this episode, the site is still close to the public and the information still unavailable.

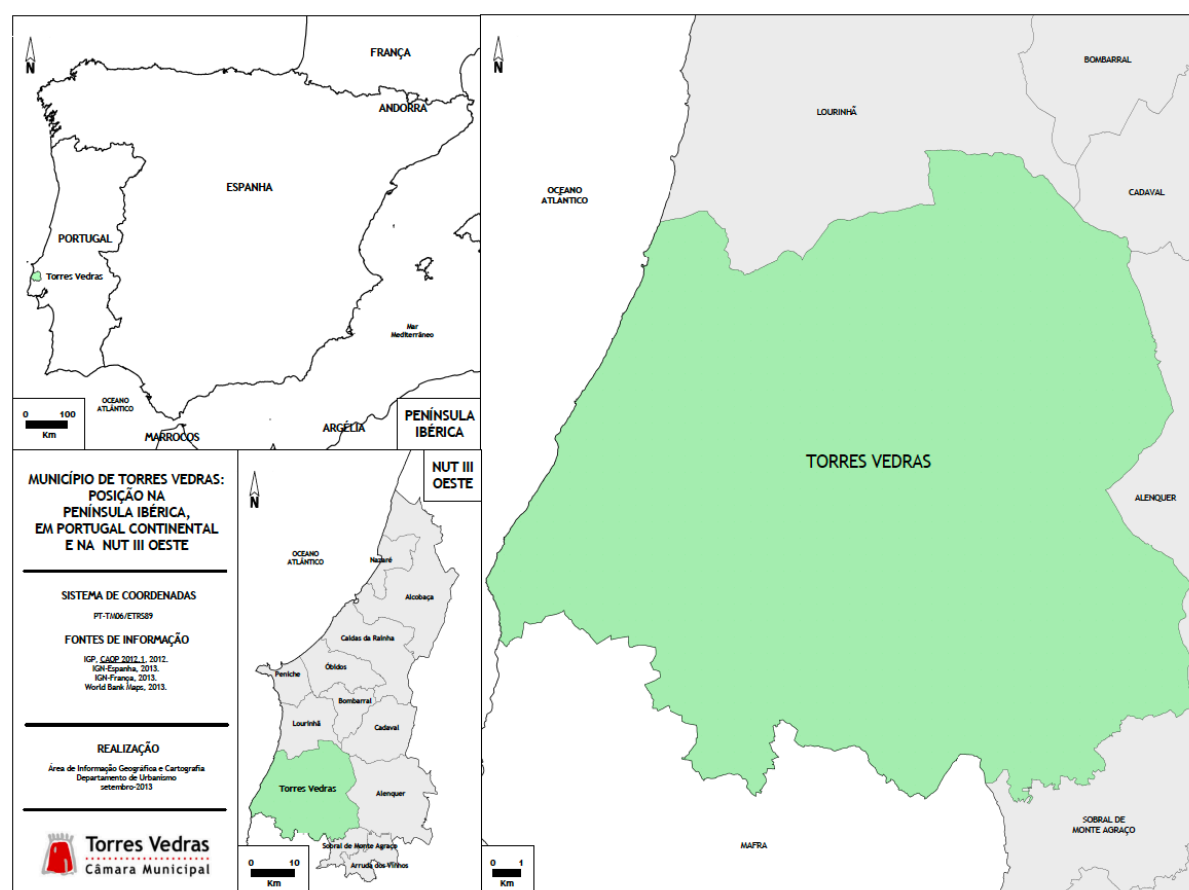
⁸ "Resilience" can be translated as the capacity over time of a **food** system to provide sufficient, appropriate and accessible food to all, in the face of various and even unforeseen disturbances.

⁹ "Food sovereignty", a term coined by members of Via Campesina in 1996, asserts that the people who produce, distribute, and consume food should control the mechanisms and policies of food production and distribution

6. Towards a policy grounded in local context: Torres Vedras as a paradigm shift

Torres Vedras municipality, is situated on the outskirts of Lisbon (see map 1) and comprises 79,465 inhabitants (INE¹⁰, 2017) within an area of 407 km². Its main economic activity is the third sector (services) that employs 67,1% of the active population, followed by the secondary sector (industry), which comprises 26,7% of its population and last the primary sector (agriculture and fisheries) weight 6,2%, this number though is high in relation to national average (3,4%). Remarkably Torres Vedras is one of the most prominent Portuguese municipality concerning conventional agricultural activity, notably polyculture (such as beans and potatoes), and it is even the municipality with the largest wine production nationwide¹¹. Foremost, Torres Vedras is a typical Portuguese municipality composed of a vibrant city center where roughly 25% of municipal inhabitants live.

Map 1–Torres Vedras location in Iberian Peninsula, Portugal national and regional contexts



Source: Torres Vedras Municipality (2020)

The municipality started in 2014 an extremely successful Food Program for School Canteens (Programa de Sustentabilidade na Alimentação Escolar – PSAE, in Portuguese). In a nutshell, the program aims to promote local economy, environmental sustainability and improve school meals. This is done by facilitating the connection between local producers and local non-for-

¹⁰ National Statistical Institute

¹¹ In <http://www.cm-tvedras.pt/economia/> (Accessed in 06.05.2020)

profit organizations with kitchen facilities that cook school meals at civil parishes level. The program provides 720,000 meals a year (2018) to 37 local kindergartens and 41 elementary schools (4170 students), 1300 meals are cooked by the municipal central kitchen, roughly 2700 meals are cooked in local non-for-profit organizations at civil parishes level (P. Rodrigues, 2020). In 2018 the municipality started a pilot program on organic schools meals having as target to find organic supply locally. Today, the number of students below city jurisdiction is bigger - 6000 students and the challenge increased. There are two options on the political agenda: 1) to buy organic food outside the municipal boundaries; 2) to increase local land for organic production, possibly considering Mouans – Sartoux municipality approach as model.

Box 1 - Mouans – Sartoux land approach

Mouans – Sartoux schools meals project is an international best practice. In 2005 the city (10.000 inhabitants) bought a 4 hectares of land as a strategy to have a municipal land reserve due to the increase of land speculation. In 2009 the municipality decided to develop vegetable growing that would be channelled to three schools canteens. After a successful first year, the municipality decided to hire a farmer under the status of "municipal agent". In parallel, the municipality invested in the farm (tractor, irrigation, greenhouses, cold room etc.). In the first year, the production - i.e. 10 tonnes of vegetables - covered 30% of the needs of the school restaurants. In 2012, it amounted to 50%, i.e. 15 tonnes. In 2015, it covered 85% demand (about 1.400 daily meals). In 2016, the municipality bought two more hectares of land for vegetable growing to be able to produce 100% of the vegetables consumed in school canteens (Rodrigo & Rioufol, 2017).

Torres Vedras is extremely active on food issues, notably due to a very enthusiastic and committed councilwoman in charge of the mentioned school programme.

In order to find adequate solutions Torres Vedras has been joining international and national exchanges on policies and practices, including the ones listed below:

- The city is a partner of the BioCanteens Transfer Network (URBACT, n.d.). This network is a key for the replication of Mouans-Sartoux's Food Schools Canteens initiative that relies today on 100% organic and local food.
- The city signed the Milan Urban Food Policy Pact (Urban, 2015), an international protocol that brings together more than 200 cities committed to seek coherence between municipal food-related policies and programmes.
- The city is a member of the international CITYFOOD network (RUAF, 2019) coordinated by RUAF and ICLEI, which aims to accelerate local and regional government action on sustainable and resilient city-region food systems.
- The city joined the international consortium coordinated by Wageningen University that prepared an application for the call – "Empowering cities as agents on food system transformation". Under this call the city is willing to work on the lack of land for gardening and farming in peri-urban areas and the lack of coordinated strategies and actions between stakeholders.

6.1. How and where to find local land for our food? A multi-actors approach

In order to understand which would be the better land policy approach, we did the mapping of Torres Vedras city departments currently involved and, of those that could potentially join. The first mapping was made with the department in charge of the Sustainable Schools Meals Programme. Table 2 illustrates the stakeholders mapped during the first round and how it has evolved through a snowball process that led to a second round.

Table 2 - City departments that can play a relevant role on land access based on Torres Vedras

Stakeholders / first round	Potential contribution
Urban planning / Strategic and territorial management (Divisão de Gestão Urbanística in Portuguese)	1) land mapping; 2) identification of land able to farming (with Environmental and sustainability division); 3) lead the process of swapping fees for land, for organic food production.
Education and sport (Divisão de Educação e Atividade Física in Portuguese)	Set up schools canteens food demand according to local organic supply; Identify children's food preferences and needs; Work on food awareness with the school community; Convene with farmers' school food needs and preferences.
Environment and sustainability Divisão de Ambiente e Sustentabilidade in Portuguese	Identify forest land (eucalyptus) to convert in orchards to supply local canteens; Assess local land that would be appropriate for organic farming.
Social Development Divisão de Desenvolvimento Social in Portuguese	Facilitate contact with relevant stakeholders, including civil parish leaders.
Stakeholders / second round	
Public Procurement and Patrimony (Contratação Pública e Património in Portuguese)	Provide updated information on the municipality's real estate / land
Urban waste management and nurseries (Limpeza urbana / gestão de resíduos urbanos/ Viveiros in Portuguese)	Provide fruit trees and seed supply for local organic farmers; Facilitate compost linkages between municipality and farmers; Coordinate compost training
Legal / Laws (Departamento Jurídico in Portuguese)	Legal advice on land access and food procurement
Torres Vedras entrepreneurship office (Investir Torres Vedras in Portuguese)	The new FarmLab dedicated to digital agriculture can collaborate with new local organic farmers.
Geographic Information System Department (Sistema de informação geográfica in Portuguese)	Mapping existing land either public as private
Fairs and close markets (Mercados e Feiras in Portuguese)	Selling local organic products; Improve awareness regarding local fresh product; Putting consumers in contact with local farmers

In February 2020 we launched a round of meetings with city departments representatives. Its aim was to identify potential contributors, in each city department, to facilitate local land access in Torres Vedras. The meetings scope quickly evolved towards potential department involvement to organic fruit and vegetables production, by means of technical support, labour, trees planting, etc..

Throughout the meetings we observed a huge potential for collaboration, facilitated by an extremely motivated staff. However, we observed as well an significant lack of knowledge about the projects carried out by other departments.

The most relevant stakeholder for this process was the representative of urban planning department due to his broad vision on land access strategies. Municipal land resources are not managed by this department, but in charge of a Public Procurement and Patrimony. During the meeting with this department, the absence of municipal land was confirmed, yet a window of opportunity opened by chance through a civil servant knowledge, that had worked in Carvoeira e Carmões civil parish, and was aware of the availability of *baldios* i.e. common land trusted¹².

As a follow-up 3 out of 13 Torres Vedras civil parishes were visited (see table 3). At least two typologies of land regime were found: 1) common land, and: 2) private donated land by private owners.

Table 3 - Torres Vedras Civil Parishes land availability profile

Civil parish	Land availability profile	Area ha. promptly available
UF Carvoeira e Carmões	Common land	39 (2 pieces of land)
Turcifal	Common land	46
UF Campelos e Outeiro da Cabeça	Land donated in 2000, today idle	1,3

Regarding specifically common land, two other relevant stakeholders were interviewed: First, the National Association of common land – Baladi¹³ (third sector), and second the Institute for conservation of forest and environment¹⁴ (Instituto de Conservação da Natureza e Floresta, in Portuguese), a state body who is today managing common land in Portugal.

Beyond city department and civil parishes, a set of additional local stakeholders should be involved in the collaborative process. Table 4 gives some insights of potential contributors.

Table 4 - Stakeholders that can play a relevant role on land access -Torres Vedras framework

Stakeholder	Stakeholder profile	Potential contribution
City Council*	Local authorities	Facilitating stakeholders connection; land mapping; juridical supporting on juridical/law issues: Providing fruit trees, etc. (see tables 2). Financial Support
Civil Parishes*	Local authorities	Making common land available; facilitating contact with landowners
Agricultural school	Private sector or/and public administration	Technical support / training skills Students labour
Private land owners	Various	Making available to farmers idle land
Private food and agriculture enterprises*	Private sector	Technical support Donations of trees and other items
National employment centre	Public Administration	Mapping available people looking for jobs; funding new farmers

¹² For better understanding of common land ownership we suggest reading the paper - A legal anthropological approach to communal lands in Portugal (Brouwer, 1999)

¹³ <https://www.baladi.pt/baladi/>

¹⁴ <http://www2.icnf.pt/portal/florestas/gf/baldios/CNVTC>

Farmers candidates	Various	Labour; Ensuring transition from conventional to organic farming
Students/Children	Civil Society	Ensure local organic food demand
School Teachers	Public administration	Working with students on food awareness
Local canteens*	Third sector/ public administration	Ensure local organic food demand
National Association of common land – Baladi*	Third sector	Scaling up of the pilot project at national level
Institute for conservation of forest and environment *	Central government	National scaling up of the pilot project; common land mapping (as foreseen in the law 75/2017); juridical support
Local restaurants	Private Sector	Ensure local organic food demand
Local residents / consumers	Civil Society	Ensure local organic food demand

- See detailed information on table 2 and 3.

6.2. Re-discovering Common Land

The common land is an ancient tradition in Portugal that goes back to the Middle Age (Brouwer, 1999; Oliveira Baptista, 1994; Paiva et al., 2019; Short & Winter, 1999). It provides a form of social security for landless poor, who were permitted to pasture cattle and cultivate plots on a temporary basis. In the 1930s, the Portuguese “New State”¹⁵ regime, aware of the extensive common land created in 1936, the Board of Internal Colonization, “a body with legal personality, autonomous operation and administration”. The competences of the Board were: “to carry out the recognition and establish the vacant land reserve of the State and administrative bodies that can be used to set up agricultural couples, taking into account the nature of the land, its extension and the benefits of the peoples with regard to their current enjoyment (Paiva et al., 2019). From the moment this Board was created, efforts were concentrated in order to identify in detail the existing common land and its location to better define a national strategy to abolish common land. That decision triggered a strong feeling of revolt and originated a temporary crisis within the government. Demonstrations were violently repressed and lots of people went to jail, but the “baldios” survived (Nunes, 2020). According to Barros and Paiva et al (Barros, 2012; Paiva et al., 2019) it was the most cunning and oppressive campaign against common land. eliminating the traditional uses, such as pastoralism, gathering firewood and scrub and drafting, by local communities. The forestation of more than 400.000 hectares of common land forced many members of local communities to leave herding in spite of local populations resistance (Brouwer, 1999; Oliveira Baptista, 1994).

Following the Revolution of April 25, 1974, profound societal changes happened. For the first time the economic and social role of common land and its community ownership was recognized by the state and incorporated in the Constitution of the Portuguese Republic approved in 1976 (Paiva et al., 2019). After 1976, four public policies were established. The first one in the 76 (Decreto Lei 39/76 updated by the Decreto Lei 40/1976), in the 93 (Lei n.º 68/93 de 4 de Setembro), in 2014 (Lei n.º 72/2014) and the last one in 2017 (Lei 75/2017). In 2008 a National Commission for the Development of Community Territories¹⁶ was created to

¹⁵ Portugal lived a dictatorial period from 1933 to 1974, known as “New State” (Estado Novo in Portuguese).

¹⁶ <http://www2.icnf.pt/portal/florestas/gf/baldios/CNVTC>

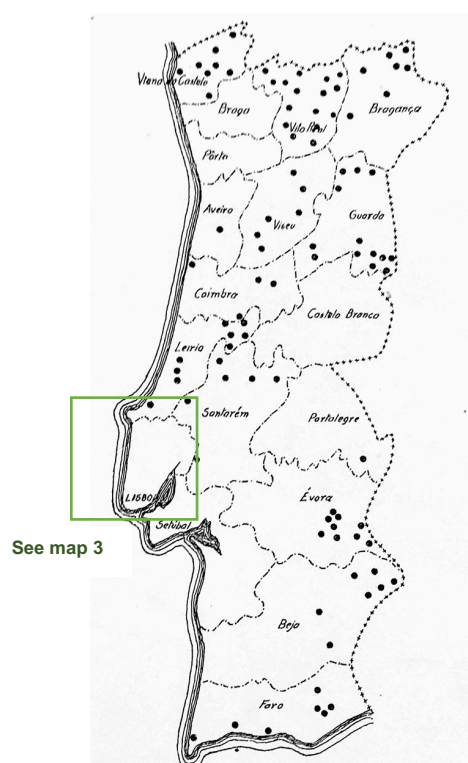
ensure sustainable forestation of remaining common land. Information obtained from a civil servant from the Institute of Nature and Forest Conservation indicated that this Commission was currently inactive.

6.3. Common land still available in Portugal today

Based on the 75/2017 law (2017) an online public platform should have been settled 120 days after its publication (Article 9) i.e., roughly by the end of 2017. This extremely useful platform would include relevant data on common land such as: geographical coordinates; area; management body; user plan¹⁷; area subjected to the forestation regime, etc..

Two years and a half after the law approval the online platform was still at the planning stage (2020). This being said the most accurate information existing so far is still the one from the survey done in 1939 by the Board of Internal Colonization during the dictatorship period. The numbers are quite impressive as a closer look to map 2 can illustrate. According to the three volumes publication - Acknowledgement of the Common Land in Continental Portugal (Ministério da Agricultura, 1939), there are 407541,99 hectares of common land in Portugal. The map 2 clearly illustrates that common lands are concentrated in the north and the interior of the country. However, as we shall discuss further there is still a significative amount of land remaining, notably near Lisbon as map 3 fairly illustrates.

Map 2- Common Land - Hectares by county at national level



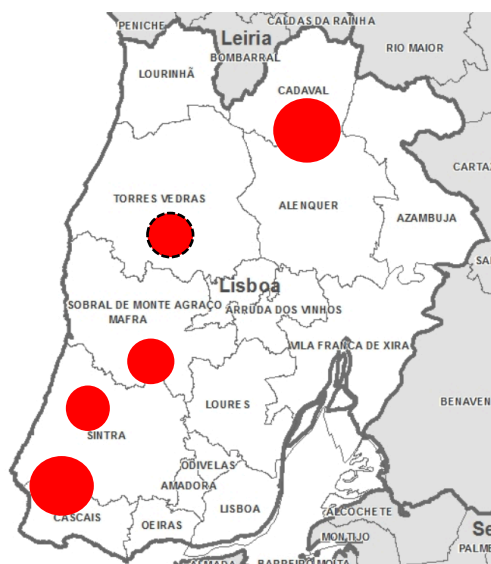
Portugal - County	Common Land (ha/county)
Vila Real	107005,13
Viseu	73391,35
Viana do Castelo	56587,58
Coimbra	34241,58
Guarda	29360,99
Bragança	25233,16
Leiria	19616,99
Santarém	14024,66
Castelo Branco	13216,97
Aveiro	8760,50
Beja	7156,00
Braga	6140,09
Faro	4244,00
Portalegre	3682,23
Porto	2530,12
Lisboa	1225,51
Évora	940,89
Setubal	184,24
TOTAL	407541,99

Source: Acknowledgement of the Common Land in Continental Portugal (1939)
 Author elaboration (2020)

¹⁷ This is an amazing opportunity to transform common land into productive land. Although, not always common land is very fertile. The option for orchards and grazing should be put in the discussion table.

It is impossible at this stage to have a clear picture of the existing common land in Portugal. Map 3 illustrates existing land in Lisbon district in 1939. Updated data was obtained for Torres Vedras municipality only.

Map 3 – Common Land - Lisbon District and its counties



Municipality	Area/ha (1939)	Area/ha (2020)
Alenquer	20,73	no data
Arruda dos Vinhos	7,86	no data
Azambuja	11,88	no data
Cadaval	301,78	no data
Cascais	403,58	no data
Loures	22,54	no data
Lourinhã	6,43	no data
Mafra	159,21	no data
Oeiras	0,87	no data
Sintra	125,57	no data
Sobral do Monte	3,30	no data
Torres Vedras	153,34	172,00
Vila Franca de Xira	8,18	no data
Total	1225,27	

Source: Acknowledgement of the Common Land in Continental Portugal (1939); Map: <https://www.espiritovianjante.com/mapa-de-portugal-geografia-turismo/>

Author elaboration (2020)

Legend:  More than 100 hectares of common land  More than 300 hectares of common land

The numbers are quite impressive: for instance, Cascais, a municipality on the outskirts of Lisbon, summed 403,58 hectares of common land. Map 3 shows as well that Torres Vedras increased common land from 153,34 hectares identified in 1939 to 172,00 hectares today.

6.4. Common land in Torres Vedras waiting to be farmed

Torres Vedras common land is located in two civil parishes¹⁸: Carvoeira e Carmões civil parish union, and Turcifal. Their presidents¹⁹²⁰ considered “common land as civil parish ownership”. Their point of view is somehow controversial as, according to law 75/2017, common land is managed by civil parishes but not owned by them.

In the paper, “A legal anthropological approach to communal lands in Portugal”, Brouwer (Brouwer, 1999) clarifies the issue of common land property rights in Portugal. He states – “the terminology referring to communal areas of land in Portugal differs between popular language, in which they are named as “montes”, meaning “ills” and the administration that name them

¹⁸ Each Portuguese municipality is administrative structured in several Civil Parishes, which have a deliberative and executive body. Civil Parish ruled several sectors as, e.g., local roads, social care, public kinder gardens, local green spaces, etc.. In some cases they manage as well land.

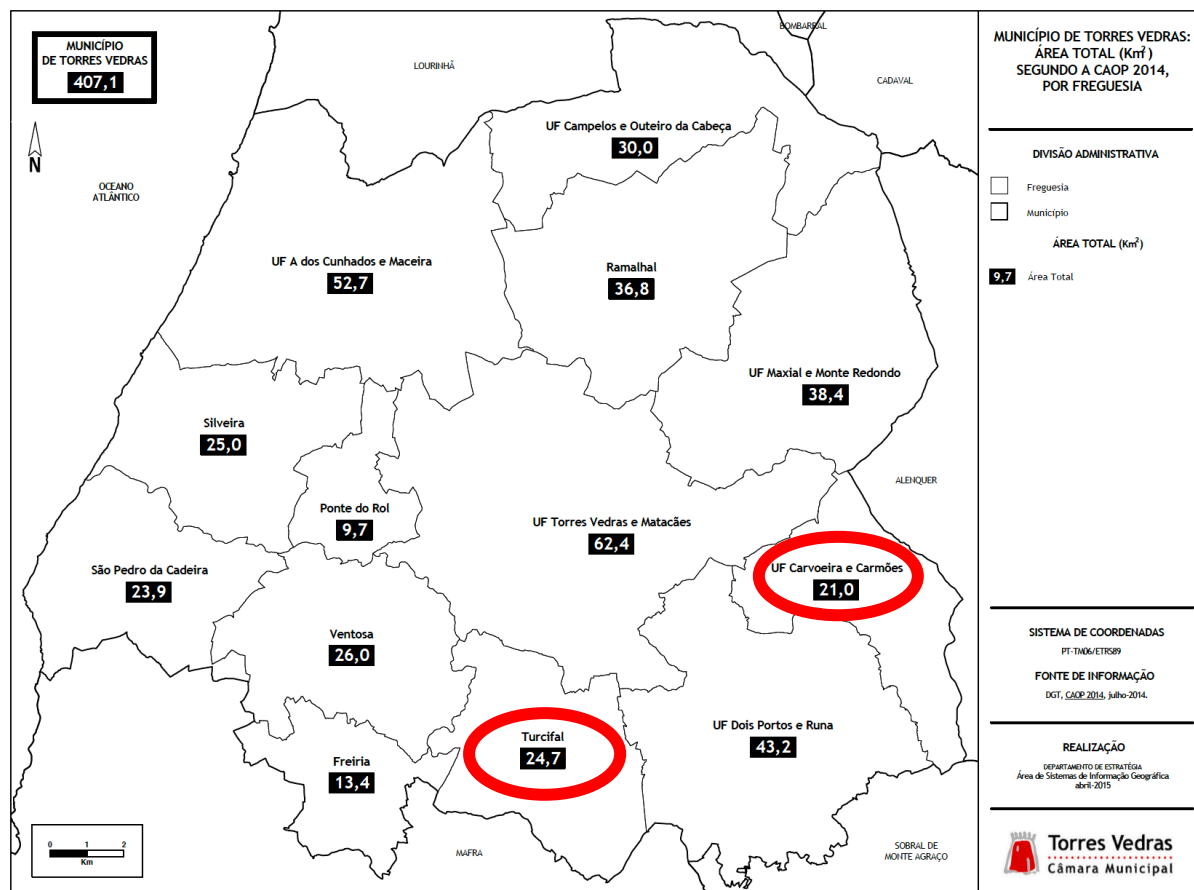
¹⁹ In Turcifal civil parish we talked with the former president, which is still today collaborating with the civil parish, as number two, below the president.

²⁰ Important to highlight that none of the presidents was aware of the law 75/2007 although both had regulated land ownerships in the 2000 decade with lawyers support.

“baldios”, meaning uncultivated, waste land. The Civil Code enacted in 1867 consigned such lands to the state, as municipal or parish property. State policy was to convert them into private property until the 1974 revolution inverted this tendency, looking for the rehabilitation of the commons (Brouwer, 1999).

Although the property title may be a relevant point in negotiating common land, the willingness of both Torres Vedras civil parishes presidents to collaborate with the municipality is a window of opportunity that needs to be taken immediately.

Map 4– Torres Vedras municipality – Availability of common land per civil parish



Source: Torres Vedras Municipality

Legend – Civil parishes with remaining common land

As a result of the information gathered during field visits, available common land in both parishes (see map 4) has a great potential for local food production, in particular horticulture, orchards and animal grazing.

Figure 1 below shows common land in the civil parish of Carvoeira e Carmões²¹ and figure 2 shows common land in Turcifal²² civil parish.

Nevertheless, other policy options can be envisioned for the future of common land, and some of them will be discussed thereafter.

²¹ Visit done on the 5th March 2020.

²² Visit done on the 11th March 2020.

Figure 1 – Common land in the civil parish - UF Carvoeira e Carmões



Photo Credits: Author (2020)

Figure 2 – Common Land in the civil parish of Turcifal



Photo Credits: Author (2020)

7. Policies approaches to turn land available for farming

Four approaches for facilitating land access are suggested. They should be considered as “mutually exclusive” and they are not steps or stages of a process. Is up to each local authority to decide which one fits better municipal needs and resources. A brief presentation of each one of them is done below:

7.1. Local authorities as the facilitators for organic farming land access

Local authorities (municipalities and civil parishes) in this case act as facilitators or brokers between landowners and potential farmers looking for land.

In municipalities where, public land or common land still exists the process will be managed between local authorities, the civil parishes and / or the local community members. A significant part of the land should be allocated for schools’ canteens supply. If additional land remains available, a start-up enterprise farm can be created either to encourage new farmers or to increase the conversion from conventional to organic farming.

In order to develop this policy approach, the City departments, the Civil Parishes, the private land owners, the farmers candidates, and a lawyer would define how the use of land can be regulated and a staff representative from schools canteens should be involved.

In a nutshell the following actions should be considered: 1 – Identify and map available land for organic farming – this should be done based on a stakeholders' approach involving civil parishes. At city level the urban planning department and the Public Procurement and Patrimony division should be involved as well; 2 – Identified land should be split at least in two parts – public land on the one hand, as the case of common land, and private land on the other; 3 – Local authorities should lead the process by matching farmers demand for land with available land; 4 – Local authorities need to ensure a scheme that would facilitate schools food supply

Two potential constraints might appear for this policy implementation: 1 – It requires someone who knows very well the territory in order to map land; 2 – It can be hard to commit private land owners to collaborate on projects with social purposes. However, this policy doesn't need a significant budget to kick-off, what can be seen as incredible opportunity.

7.2. Fiscal incentives to turn idle urban land more attractive for farming use

This policy approach implies urban land owners should pay additional fiscal taxes, in case their land remains idle. The strategy is to reduce the attractiveness of keeping idle land, so that owners would be urged to lease their land for agricultural purposes. This policy can be extremely persuasive in very intensely urbanized areas. In Portuguese context, such a policy measure could not be as effective as in countries where land is scarce and even if available land is expensive. In any case, this solution can be tested as a pilot in Lisbon, where land is scarce and extremely expensive due to urbanization pressure.

In addition, political willingness is required to increase taxation once this solution is settled at fiscal and technical levels.

In order to develop this policy, the City departments, Central Finances Secretariat, and the Central Government, should be primarily involved, among others.

In a nutshell the following actions should be considered: 1 - Map land labelled as rural in finance municipal Secretariat, but labelled as urban in the city master plan; 2 - Map all the idle urban available land fit for organic farming; 3 - Cross check data though verifying land labelled as rural in fiscal departments although labelled as urban in master plan²³, or the other way around; 4 - Ensure that all labelled urban land in the master plan will pay fiscal taxes as urban land; 5 - Increase taxation for all urban labelled idle land.

Three potential constraints can be identified: 1 – It can be time consuming; 2 - From a political point of view can be unpopular; 3 – Involves the central government. However, in very urbanized cities this can be the only way to facilitate land access for farming

7.3. Local authorities support conversion from conventional to organic farming

The strategy for conversion of conventional farming into organic farming is hardly the role of local authorities. Moreover, they usually do not have the technical capacities to carry out such a task. This national public policy would need mostly external agencies contribution. In addition,

²³ Land labelled as rural in finance department fiscal has lower fiscal taxes comparatively with land labelled as urban.

this conversion needs to be attractive to conventional farmers. Even if the market is demanding more organic food, a market for both conventional and organic do exist. Conversion to organic farming relies on farmers' willingness as well. Conversion implies as non-productive and regenerative time of the land up to 3 years to secure a process of land becoming suitable for organic farming certification,

In order to develop this policy, at least, conventional farmers; national Agriculture Ministry (central government) and external agencies, primarily for training and capacity building of local authorities and farmers, should be involved.

The following actions should be considered: 1 - Awareness raising farmers campaigns; 2 - Public events with consumers in order to increase local organic food demand; 3 - Farmers training; 4 - Financing support (state or local authorities).

Potential constraints: 1 - Time consuming; 2 - Some municipalities, as Torres Vedras, are economically too dependent on conventional agricultures which represents a significative income to local population. However, from the environmental point of view the conversion to organic farming could be extremely positive, and economically attractive in the long run.

7.4. Swapping land fees into land for organic farming

This policy approach can only be done under the umbrella of a clear municipal food vision and strategy. This implies a multi-stakeholder and multisector approach to develop a municipal food vision and strategy, that takes access to land as a key entry point. Such a process might take time and generate conflicts that will need to be smoothen out. In particular, it requires a trained facilitator able to facilitate the process. Once the strategy approved by all stakeholders, the local authorities will need to channeled the collected land taxes on idle land to the newly installed organic farmers.

In order to develop this policy, Local authorities, City departments, Local stakeholders, and Landowners, should be involved.

The following actions should be considered: 1 – Develop a municipal food strategy involving all the city departments and local stakeholders, having land access as a priority; 2 – Define how much land is needed for organic farming; 3 – Define and put into place, at city level, the appropriated land tax transfer mechanism.

Potential constraints: 1 - Could be time consuming; 2 - Could be difficult to reach consensus among local stakeholders; 3 - Appropriate land might not be obtained; 4 - Need to be sure that local authorities' potential fiscal loss will be compensated with additional taxes coming from other city domains. However, it could be the most appropriate policy where idle land is scarce

Table 5 briefly present a multi-dimensional analysis comparing the four policy options previously presented through a set of 11 criterions scrutinized though five dimensions:

- 1) **Number of hectares of land, fruits and vegetables that could be reached** (2 criterion)
 - As this is the main goal of this policy this should be a crucial criteria.

Based on Mouans-Sartoux experience, and considering the target of 100% local organic vegetables supply for schools canteens, we estimate the need for 20 hectares of land to fulfill 6.000 meals a day in Torres Vedras. Meaning 60 tonnes of fruit and vegetables for a year.

- 2) **Time involved** (4 criterions) – here several time frames need to be unfolded: time to reach the needed land; time required for growing food – from seed to table; political time ruled by a 4 years electoral period; time regarding institutional acts approval.

- 3) **Institutional feasibility either regarding human resources or political framework** (3 criterions) – includes political constraints; operational constraints and lack of human resources as an additional impediment.
- 4) **Implementation cost** (1 criteria) – refers to the budget needed to implement the policy.
- 5) **Public acceptance**(1 criteria) – meaning how the community is going to react to the policy, either in a positive or negative way.

Table 5 - Policy option matrix – Comparing the various policies approaches

		Evaluation Criteria	Current program - PSAE	Local authorities as the facilitators for organic farming land access	Fiscal incentives to turn idle urban land more attractive for farming use	Local authorities support conversion from conventional to organic farming	Swapping land fees into land for organic farming
Number	1.1	Hectares that could be reached immediately	None	A significative amount of land. E.g. in Torres Vedras have currently land available (common land) - 20 ha need to cover 100% school supply demand	No data.	Depends from farmers willingness	No data available
	1.2	Fruits and vegetables (60 tonnes to cover 100% schools demand)	None	100%	Depends on the number of hectares of land	Depends on land availability	Depends on land availability
Time	2.1	To reach land needed	Very long, as it is up to farmers to find the needed land.	Short term. Local authorities have a facilitating role	Long term. Overpass local authorities jurisdiction.	Medium term. Overpass local authorities jurisdiction.	Medium term, if support by political will.
	2.2	Required for growing food	Do not apply	Short term	Long term	Medium term	Medium term.
	2.3	Political time ruled by 4 years period	Do not apply	Short term. Can be achieved during political period	Long term. No possible to achieve in the political period	Short term. Can be eventually achieved during political period	Medium term. Can be eventually achieved during political period
	2.4	Time regarding institutional acts approval	Do not apply	Short term. Just need political will to kick off the process	Long term. Many different stakeholders. Overpass local authorities jurisdiction	Medium term. Overpass local authorities jurisdiction	Medium term, if support by political will.

Feasibility	3.1	Institutional Feasibility – eventual political constraints	Do not apply	Medium. Requires some inter-departmental coordination, and stakeholders collaboration	Do not apply	Do not apply	Medium/hard. Requires inter-departmental coordination, stakeholders collaboration and a holistic food vision and strategy.
	3.2	Institutional Feasibility – operational constraints (inside and outside municipally)	Do not apply	Easy, if idle public land or common land for farming is available	Hard, as several institutions are involved and could have different times and values.	Medium/hard. Requires external agencies contribution and framers willingness	Medium. Can generate conflicts among stakeholders that need to be smoothen
	3.3	Institutional Feasibility – human resources (municipality)	Do not apply	Requires someone with facilitation skills.	In the first stage only, the Urban Planning department is involved	Does not involve municipal human resources	Requires someone with facilitation skills.
Cost	4.1	Implementati on costs	Do not apply	Costs can be internalized.	No cost involved at municipal level. In addition, there is a slight possibility of taxes improvement.	Does not require municipal budget as this task overpass municipal jurisdiction	There are no costs. Still could be better to have a facilitator outside the municipal staff
Acceptance	5.1	Public acceptance	No data	Very strong according to our survey results seen as first option	This option can be unpopular, according to our survey results	This option is seen as a strong second option	Very strong, at least regarding the development of a municipal food vision.

Legend: Long term – above 3 years; medium term – between a year and 3 years; Short term – under 1 year
 Author elaboration (2020)

In summary different policies can be apply to achieve the same goal, i.e. increase local organic food production (fruits and vegetables) to supply local canteens. We consider each policy as being mutually exclusive, that are not stages of the same process but different policies approaches that should be considered according to the context. For instance, having “local authorities as the facilitators for organic farming land access” might be the best option if public land is available or if the level of private land owners awareness concerning local food systems is high. The option for “fiscal incentives to turn idle urban land more attractive for farming use” demands a high political investment and stakeholders concertation therefore, it might be more appropriate as a policy at central government level. Having “local authorities support conversion from conventional to organic farming” could be the best option where land is scarce and when a strong political commitment of improving local organic production exists. Finally, we consider “swapping land fees into land for organic farming” is the policy that could better fit a circular and systemic food vision for the city future is strong, however it might be difficult to reach in a short time when a local authorities silo culture that, prevents a holistic food vision and strategy, exists.

8. Having local authorities as key facilitators for land access remains an immediate option

We argue that public idle land in a first stage, and then private land, should be identified and mapped out by local authorities. Those pieces of land should be made available to organizations and farmers willing to supply local schools canteens primarily and local consumers. Local authorities are the key players in such process as they have the resources and the power. From the local authorities political point of view there are at least four arguments to substantiate such a proposal:

1 - Land not being used is a lost resource

In case public idle land is not being used, public resources are not used and bear an additional maintenance cost that is being indirectly supported by taxpayers.

This should be the leading option due to the following elements:

- Common land must be re-appropriated though uses bringing community benefits;
- Common land is in danger of being lost i.e. privatized;
- There is an urgent need of rescuing the meaning of commons and common good. Food should be seen as part of it, in particularly food for children and vulnerable people.

2 - Lessons learned from the pandemic highlight that local food systems need to be resilient to external shocks

Local authorities should have a more pro-active role regarding land needs for local organic farmers in order to fulfil the needs of local communities in uncertain times. Food is today considered a life sustainable function. The political motto “let’s use our land to feed our children” can raise community support and could be a powerful and consensual starting point.

3 - No significant additional budget to kick off the process

Implementation costs are quite limited. What is needed is political will and a person with negotiation skills from local authority staff. For instance, trees for planting orchards or seedlings can come from municipal nurseries, available labour force could be identified through the unemployment national centre or from new leaseholders farmers or even, by agricultural schools as part of practical training.

4 - Can be implemented straight away and results can be obtained during the next harvest

If land is made available, results can be obtained during the next harvest. Political victory can be proclaimed immediately, i.e. during the existing political mandate. Given the food shock caused by the pandemic, “reclaim our land today” could not be more on the right time. The time is now!

In summary a local authority should consider the following steps:

- 1 Identify and map out available land for organic farming – this should be done based on a multi-stakeholders’ approach;
- 2 Define a municipality representative who will facilitate land use agreements processes;
- 3 Define a budget for launching the initiative considering the various municipality departments and divisions.

- 4 - Commit city departments and divisions²⁴ to engage on the process, primarily:
- Legal Department, on the land use legal regulation;
 - Environment and Sustainability Division, on the analysis of the soil quality and the ongoing reforestation city project that might be a window of opportunity for horticultural and orchards uses;
 - Strategic and Territorial Planning Division on land mapping;
 - Division of Education and Physical Activity (PSAE), on the needs for school canteens of fresh organic food supply;
 - Public Procurement and Patrimony Division on the supply bids;
 - Municipal nurseries on seeds and seedling provision fruit trees;
 - Financial Division to secure budgetary resources;
 - Division of Municipal Infrastructure and Building on building infrastructure support such as fences or water provision;
 - Division of Human Resources in the recruitment process of facilitators, farmers, etc.;
 - Communication Division, in order to launch awareness raising campaigns for local food consumption and to disseminate the project at local and national levels.

Other local actors to be engaged:

- The Civil Parish, in the inventory of available manpower and machinery;
- The Not-for-profit organizations, not only in the inventory and quantification of food needs, but also in the potential manpower available;
- Local agriculture and food enterprises in technical support, which can be done under the national sponsorship law;
- Local agricultural school in technical support, and eventual workforce.

9. Need for more time and collaboration regarding other potential policies

Having opted as the most suitable policy option to have local authorities as key facilitators for organic farming land access, do not set aside previous policy options notably the ones presented previously:

- Fiscal incentives to turn idle urban land more attractive for farming use;
- Local authorities support conversion from conventional to organic farming;
- Swapping land fees into land for organic farming

However, some constraints might arise from those policies options:

- First, additional time might be required to reaching goals: (a) as time to get land actually cultivated; (b) time regarding institutional acts approvals, and finally; (c) political feasibility during a political mandate;
- The second reason relates to its institutional feasibility. The options not chosen do require more human resources involvement either from the municipality, from external entities or the central government. This context might turn to be a strong constraint due to the current lack of institution's human resources in Portugal;
- Third and last, the three mentioned policy options would require much more collaboration between institutions and internal departments which, giving the national silos institutional culture is a challenge in some municipalities.

²⁴ Based on Torres Vedras City Departments and Divisions.

However, there isn't a one fit all solution. Each municipality should consider the drivers and constraints, considering its specific context. Moreover, there is room to re-adjust policy options time wise.

10. Local authorities supporting access to land for farmers – a Call for Action

How local authorities can turn idle land into the decisive element of a blooming local food system? We advocate that local authorities should open a Call for Action based on the following five recommendations:

10.1. Engage a multi - stakeholders' debate

This debate should focus primarily on how the transition to a local and resilient food system could sustain a healthy soil regeneration, biodiversity and cycles adapted to local conditions, ecosystems, and people, having land access as a priority. In order to do so, local authorities should develop a sustainable food vision, strategy and policies for their territory regarding food from "production to consumption", in coherence with other existing municipal activities and programs.

10.2. Make land available for farmers by mobilizing agricultural land under public domain

There is a huge potential of common land to be used for farming²⁵. However as not all municipalities have the chance to hold common land, additional options should be considered based on the following:

- 1) Common land availability and assessment of its potential for organic farming;
- 2) Public land not being used with farming potential at city and civil parishes levels;
- 3) Private idle land with farming potential.

In order to do this, local authorities should start a process of land mapping for local organic farming, involving all the landowners from public to private sectors. Local food production development should be seen as a collective investment for a better future, in line with the city food vision mentioned previously.

10.3. Provide a facilitating environment to agroecological farmers and green economy

Given land prices rise, access to land has become a challenge for newcomers who do not have family land. To allow for an inter - generational transition, local authorities should provide land for a specific time and offer learning opportunities to young farmers committed to develop agroecological farming. By supporting local farmers, local authorities can ensure that the activity will remain sustainable in the future. In addition, this is a way of insuring resilience in times of uncertainty. In order to do this, an open call for farmers willing to participate in such transition process, having land for free and mentorship for a period of time in exchange of food donating to schools may fit both parties' needs. These are the conditions for a win-win solution.

²⁵ With a social purpose instead of the mainstreaming central government option in turning common land into forestry.

10.4. Prioritize organic food supply to schools canteens

There is an increasing demand for local organic food in schools and restaurants. To ensure local organic farming attractiveness, besides facilitating land access for new farmers, local authorities can have a proactive role to meet the growing demand. In order to do this, local authorities can foster short supply chains, developing access to local markets and fairs, prioritizing local farmers in public tenders and educating local consumers to the benefits of local food.

10.5. Create awareness on seasonal food, taste and nutrition

Knowing that farmers give insight into the seasons, the land, and food nutrition. Young children, from local schools, could visit local farms to learn about nature and agriculture. Public education campaigns centered upon the benefits of local food and the traditional and modern knowledge and know-how of local farmers could generate a community support and increase local food demand.

11 The time for action is now: What comes next?

In conclusion, the five recommendations mentioned could be a powerful contribution to address cooperation among local stakeholders and ultimately led to an integrated food strategy that would consider local organic farming as a social imperative. However, local policies require a bundle of instruments which will vary from place to place, therefore flexibility and timing are key ingredients.

We argue that the time to act is now. Due to Covid pandemic, local authorities become conscious of the urgent need to increase local production as a way to be more self – resilient to external crisis. In this sense, the global pandemic crisis has created a window of opportunity to grow food locally. This cannot be done without land. Local authorities have a crucial role in facilitating land access to new farmers. The current challenge has been remarkable identified by us in 2019, and it is the core of our policy problem, i.e. lack of land to produce local food to supply school meals”.

We acknowledge existing national policies advocating for more national production, notably concerning organic food, however there is a gap between good intentions and clear implementation tools. We acknowledge as well that changes required political will and commitment. At the same time changes are easier to happen at local level where decision making structures are lighter and stakeholder connections are easier to build.

Grounded on Torres Vedras pilot study, we acknowledge that local authorities, local organizations, farmers, consumers, and academia, have unique skills that need to be considered and combined in order to develop a more effective and sustainable local food systems.

What comes next? Overall, local food policies should always be thought of as dynamic, and aim for a constant re-adjustment based on evidence of what works and what does not. We have the chance to be able to learn from countries with previous work in the field, therefore less mistakes will be made. Lessons learned from 20 years of food policies in the United States demonstrate that food has conquered a legitimate area of action on local government. However, (1) food still needs to receive constant support from city council to keep up. Then, avoiding “stop and goes” regarding political support is still a challenge for urban food policies. We know as well that (2) policy outcomes reflect the point of views and interests of stakeholders who took part in the policy making process. Therefore, if the process fails to engage the full all spectrums of stakeholders there is a risk of further contributing to the general unfairness of food systems. Finally, (3) local governments need to become more reflexive about their food policies. Sharing experiences, including failures, have never been so important. Monitoring and evaluation lay at the heart of a reflexive policy, and should be key to the next generation of local food policies. This can be quite a challenge, as Portugal doesn't have a tradition of policies assessment (Delgado, 2020). This is not to say, that data is not collected, mainly due to European Union requirements. However a systematic and repeated reflection on processed data and lessons learned from failures or successes is largely missing. Let's hope that Portuguese local authorities will have the needed resources and willingness to put policies monitoring and assessment finally on the table.

References

- Allagnat, M. (2012). *Access to Land in Southern Spain : From under-productive latifundia to workers ' cooperatives established on public land. March 2014*, 1–18.
- Angotti, T. (2015). Urban agriculture: Long-term strategy or impossible dream?. Lessons from prospect farm in brooklyn, New York. *Public Health*, 129(4), 336–341. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.puhe.2014.12.008>
- Barros, M. G. (2012). *Os Baldios - História, desenvolvimento e gestão: o concelho de Ponte de Lima*. Instituto Politécnico de Viana do Castelo.
- Brouwer, R. (1999). Changing name-tags: A legal anthropological approach to communal lands in Portugal. *Journal of Legal Pluralism and Unofficial Law*, 31(43), 1–30. <https://doi.org/10.1080/07329113.1999.10756527>
- Cabannes, Y., & Marocchino, C. (2018). *Integrating Food into Urban Planning* | (The Bartle). <https://www.ucl.ac.uk/bartlett/development/publications/2018/nov/integrating-food-urban-planning>
- Carvalho, M. (2015). *Governo avança com tomada de posse das terras sem dono conhecido*.
- Delgado, C. (2015). Answer to the Portuguese Crisis: Turning Vacant Land into Urban Agriculture. *Cities and the Environment (CATE)*, 8(2), 5.
- Delgado, C. (2017). Mapping urban agriculture in Portugal: Lessons from practice and their relevance for European post-crisis contexts. *Moravian Geographical Reports*, 25(3), 139–153. <https://doi.org/10.1515/mgr-2017-0013>
- Delgado, C. (2018). Contrasting practices and perceptions of urban agriculture in Portugal. *International Journal of Urban Sustainable Development*, 10(2), 170–185. <https://doi.org/10.1080/19463138.2018.1481069>
- Delgado, C. (Ed.). (2020a). *Alimentar Boas Práticas: da Produção ao Consumo Sustentável 2020*. CICS.NOVA - FCSH - Universidade Nova de Lisboa.
- Delgado, C. (2020b). Uma estratégia alimentar sem território. In *Pontes entre a Agricultura Familiar e a Agricultura Biológica* (Centro de, p. 368).

- Dubbeling, M. (2015). City Region Food Systems: Building sustainable and resilient city regions. *Urban Agriculture Magazine*, 29, 3–4.
- European Access to Land network. (2017). *Local authorities supporting access to land for farmers : stories from Europe*. June.
- FAO. (2020). FAO - Framework for the Urban Food Agenda. In *FAO Framework for the Urban Food Agenda*. <https://doi.org/10.4060/ca3151en>
- Gonçalves, R. G. G. (2014). *Hortas Urbanas: Estudo do Caso de Lisboa*. 130.
- Kruth, J. (2015). Vacant Land Use. *Cities and the Environment*, 8(2). <http://digitalcommons.lmu.edu/cate/vol8/iss2/20>
- Leticia, A., & Fernandes, P. (2014). *Agricultura Urbana e Sustentabilidade das cidades - Projeto “horta à porta” no Grande Porto*.
- Lohrberg F. (2016). *COST-Action Urban Agriculture Europe (UAE) Urban Agriculture and the European Agenda Urban Agriculture and the European Agenda*.
- Lusa. (2011). Portugal tem dois milhões de terra abandonada. *Diário de Notícias*.
- Marian, O. (2018). *Tendências de Consumo de Alimentos Biológicos*.
- McClintock, N., Cooper, J., & Khandeshi, S. (2013). Assessing the potential contribution of vacant land to urban vegetable production and consumption in Oakland, California. *Landscape and Urban Planning*, 111(1), 46–58. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.landurbplan.2012.12.009>
- Mendes, D. C. de S. (2015). *Hortas Urbanas no concelho do Porto: Tipologias e Padrões Hortas Urbanas no concelho do Porto: Tipologias e Padrões Territoriais*. https://sigarra.up.pt/flup/pt/pub_geral.show_file?pi_gdoc_id=478134%5Cn
- Ministério da Agricultura. (1939). *Reconhecimento dos baldios do continente - Portugal*. Junta de Colonização Interna.
- Morgan, K. (2015). Nourishing the city: The rise of the urban food question in the Global North. *Urban Studies*, 52(8), 1379–1394. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0042098014534902>
- Mouans-Sartoux. (n.d.). *Mouans-Sartoux | URBACT*. Retrieved May 6, 2020, from <https://urbact.eu/mouans-sartoux>
- Nunes, F. (2020). *Baldios - all you want to about it*.
- Oliveira Baptista, F. (1994). A agricultura e a questão da terra - do Estado Novo à Comunidade Europeia. *Análise Social*, 29(128), 907–921. <https://doi.org/10.2307/41011193>
- Paiva, R., Cabral, R., & Lopes, C. (2019). *Baldios, História e Legislação*.
- Pothukuchi, K., & Kaufman, J. L. (1999). Placing the food system on the urban agenda: The role of municipal institutions in food systems planning. In *Agriculture and Human Values* (Vol. 16).
- Prové, C., Dessein, J., & Krom, M. de. (2016). Taking context into account in urban agriculture governance: Case studies of Warsaw (Poland) and Ghent (Belgium). *Land Use Policy*, 56, 16–26. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.landusepol.2016.04.025>
- Rego, J. (2018). *No centro do poder: Governo e administração pública em Portugal* (FFMS). FFMS. <https://www.ffms.pt/publicacoes/detalhe/2561/no-centro-do-poder-governo-e-administracao-publica-em-portugal>
- Rodrigo, J., & Rioufol, V. (2017). *Supporting access to land for farmers in Europe*. 162.
- Rodrigues, P. (2020). *Sustainable Food Schools Program* (pp. 1–22).
- Rodrigues, S. C. A. (2012). *Um modelo para a implementação de redes de hortas urbanas*.
- RUAF. (2019). *CITYFOOD Network*. RUAF Website. <http://www.milanurbanfoodpolicypact.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/Milan-Urban->

Food-Policy-Pact-EN.pdf

- Short, C., & Winter, M. (1999). The problem of common land: Towards stakeholder governance. *Journal of Environmental Planning and Management*. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09640569910911>
- Sousa, R. (2019). Alimentação, Compras Públicas e Desenvolvimento Sustentável - o caso das escolas. In *Tese de Doutoramento em Sociologia*.
- Timmermans, F., Commission, E., Timmermans, D., & Public, E. (2019). *Farm to Fork: food sustainability needs an effective consumption strategy*. 2016–2018.
- Tornaghi, C. (2014). Critical geography of urban agriculture. *Progress in Human Geography*, 38(4), 551–567. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0309132513512542>
- URBACT. (n.d.). *BioCanteens | URBACT*. Retrieved May 6, 2020, from <https://urbact.eu/biocanteens>
- Urban, I. M. (2015). *Il Milan Urban Food Policy Pact*.
- Yigitcanlar, T., & Dizdaroglu, D. (2015). Ecological approaches in planning for sustainable cities a review of the literature. *Global Journal of Environmental Science and Management*, 1(2), 159–188. <https://doi.org/10.7508/gjesm.2015.02.008>

Acknowledgments

This policy study would not be possible without Fundación Calouste Gulbenkian – LEAP – Policy Development Initiative support, ICPA/IES training, in addition to Torres Vedras municipality and local stakeholder collaboration. A special thanks to Andreas Kraemer for his mentorship and standing inspiration.

Disclaimer

This document resulted from the participation of its author in a training program of the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation. LEAP – Policy Development Initiative is a capacity building programme about evidence-based public policy recommendations on sustainable production and consumption, designed for researchers and employees of non-profit organisations, universities and public administration.

The content and opinions expressed in this document are the sole responsibility of its author and do not necessarily reflect the policy or position of the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation and its LEAP – Policy Development Initiative partners.

For more information about the project: <https://gulbenkian.pt/en/project/leap-policy-development-initiative/>

Author: Cecília Delgado

Cecília Delgado is an urban planner and architect, university professor, and researcher in Public Policy, in the articulation between Territorial Planning, Food Systems and Local Development. Currently, she is a researcher at the Faculty of Social Sciences and Humanities - Universidade Nova de Lisboa (FCT - Transitory Norm - [FCSH001730]) and CICS.NOVA, Interdisciplinary Center of Social Sciences of UNL affiliated. As part of her research, she has been constructing a critical review of international food policies in collaboration with RUAF, the Resource Centre on Urban Agriculture and Food Systems. At the national level she has collaborated with local governments and non-profit organizations. She is co-founder of the Food Sustainable Cities platform created in 2018, a

national collective that brings together several actors and sectors of the national food system.
Her publications can be accessed here:
https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Cecilia_Delgado5
Email and contact: ceciliadelgado@fcsh.unl.pt; (00351) 916147158